

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 27, 29, and 30 are now pending in this application. Claim 28 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 27 and 29 are independent and have been amended. Support for these changes can be found in the original application, as filed. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

Claims 27, 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,230,745 (Street, Jr.). Claim 28 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Street, Jr. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,026,156 (Epler et al.). Applicants submit that the cited art, whether taken individually or in combination, does not teach or suggest many features of the present invention, as previously recited in these claims. Therefore, these rejections are respectfully traversed. Nevertheless, Applicants submit that independent Claims 27 and 29, for example, as presented, amplify the distinctions between the present invention and the cited art.

In one aspect of the present invention, independent Claim 27 recites an information processing apparatus for executing a predetermined procedure corresponding to a command designated by a user. The apparatus includes a database which holds (i) a plurality of candidates corresponding to a plurality of commands and (ii) command groups, each command group including a plurality of commands related to each other, a selection unit which selects (i) a command group from the database in response to a user operation and (ii) the candidates from the database that correspond to the plurality of commands in the selected command group, a voice output unit that receives from the selection unit the selected candidates and outputs each

selected candidate one at a time as voice information, a decision button which is operable by the user to designate any one of the selected candidates output by the voice output unit, and a determination unit which determines (i) which one of the candidates is designated by the user and (ii) a command in the database that corresponds to the designated candidate.

In another aspect of the present invention, independent Claim 29 recites a method of controlling an information processing apparatus, which executes a predetermined procedure corresponding to a command designated by a user, and includes a database which holds (i) a plurality of candidates corresponding to a plurality of commands and (ii) command groups, each command group including a plurality of commands related to each other, a voice output unit that outputs a candidate as voice information and a decision button operable by the user to designate any candidate output by the voice output unit. The method includes the steps of selecting (i) a command group from the database, in response to a user operation and (ii) the candidates from the database that correspond to the plurality of commands in the selected command group, receiving from the selecting step the selected candidates in the voice output unit, outputting, by the voice output unit, each selected candidate one at a time as the voice information, and determining (i) which one of the candidates is designated by operation of the decision button by the user and (ii) a command in the database which corresponds to the designated candidate.

In Applicants' invention, as recited in independent Claims 27 and 29, while any one of the selected candidates is output by the voice output unit, the user can exclusively designate the voice output candidate using the decision button. In a case where the selected candidates include at least a first candidate and a second candidate, when the user operates the decision button during the voice information corresponding to the first candidate that is output by the voice output unit, the determination unit determines a command corresponding to the first candidate is

determined as the designated command and does not determine a command corresponding to one of the selected candidates other than the first candidate as the designated command, and when the user operates the decision button during the voice information corresponding to the second candidate that is output by the voice output unit, the determination unit determines a command corresponding to the other candidate is determined as the designated command and does not determine a command corresponding to one of the selected candidates other than the second candidate as the designated command.

The present invention provides advantages over conventional arrangements. For example, the present invention provides the ability to reliably designate which candidate a user has chosen. For example, a voice output unit may output as voice information a variety of paper sizes such as, “automatic,” “A4,” “A4R,” and “A3,” sequentially. When the user hears a candidate he desires, the user presses the decision button. For example, when the user hears “A4,” the user presses the decision button and the “A4” command is sent to the image forming apparatus. Therefore, a command is determined from a relationship between the voice information corresponding to a variety of candidates being output, and an operation of the decision button. If the decision button is operated when “A4” is outputted, a command will not be designated for “automatic,” “A4R,” or “A3.” A user, therefore, will not mistakenly press the wrong button, but rather, will press a single button when the user hears the output of a candidate that matches their desired candidate.

Applicants submit that the cited art does not teach or suggest such features of Applicants’ present invention, as recited in independent Claims 27 and 29.

Street, Jr. teaches the outputting of a voice message that list processes capable of being performed. In Street, Jr. in the case where a voice message, “Press or say ‘1’ if you don’t want

to receive a fax, '2' if you want to receive this fax now, '3' for us to hang up and call you back later, '4' if you want to forward this fax somewhere else, or '5' if you want us to place this fax on hold", is outputted. As seen in Fig. 5 of Street, Jr., the cancel option, send option, retry option, forward option, or hold option is executed in accordance with the pressing or saying of "1," "2," "3," "4," or "5," respectively. In other words, the option to be executed is based on which key is pressed or what number is said by the user.

Therefore, each process is associated with a separate button. Since each function is associated with a separate button, a different operation may be selected than the operation currently being read as a prompt. The user may accidentally press the wrong button and receive the wrong function. Therefore, Street, Jr. does not teach or suggest at least a decision button which is operable by a user to designate any one of selected candidates output by a voice output unit, as in Applicants' invention as recited in independent Claims 27 and 29. Street, Jr. further does not teach or suggest features of Applicants invention as recited in those independent claims, such that while any one of the selected candidates is output by the voice output unit, the user can exclusively designate the voice output candidate using the decision button, and in a case where the selected candidates include at least a first candidate and a second candidate, when the user operates the decision button during voice information corresponding to first candidate that is output by a voice output unit, the determination unit determines a command corresponding to the first candidate is determined as the designated command and does not determine a command corresponding to one of the selected candidates other than the first candidate as the designated command, and when the user operates the decision button during the voice information corresponding to the second candidate that is output by the voice output unit, the determination unit determines a command corresponding to the other candidate is determined as the designated

command and does not determine a command corresponding to one of the selected candidates other than the second candidate as the designated command. Accordingly, Street, Jr. does not teach or suggest many features of the present invention as recited in independent Claims 27 and 29.

Applicants further submit that the remaining cited art does not cure the deficiencies noted above of Street, Jr.

Epler et al. relates to an enhanced call waiting system. As shown in Figure 4B of Epler et al., a user is presented with a variety of options, each option relating to a specific button. In order to select a specific option, the button relating to that option must be pressed. However, Epler et al. does not teach or suggest at least a decision button which is operable by a user to designate any one of selected candidates output by a voice output unit, as in Applicants' invention as recited in independent Claims 27 and 29. Further, Epler et al., as with Street, Jr., does not teach or suggest features of Applicants' invention as recited in those independent claims, such that while any one of the selected candidates is output by the voice output unit, the user can exclusively designate the voice output candidate using the decision button, and in a case where the selected candidates include at least a first candidate and a second candidate, when the user operates the decision button during voice information corresponding to first candidate that is output by a voice output unit, the determination unit determines a command corresponding to the first candidate is determined as the designated command and does not determine a command corresponding to one of the selected candidates other than the first candidate as the designated command, and when the user operates the decision button during the voice information corresponding to the second candidate that is output by the voice output unit, the determination unit determines a command corresponding to the other candidate is determined as the designated

command and does not determine a command corresponding to one of the selected candidates other than the second candidate as the designated command. Accordingly, Epler et al. adds nothing to the teachings of Street, Jr. that would render obvious Applicants' invention, as recited in independent Claims 27 and 29.

Dependent Claim 30 also should be deemed allowable, in its own right, for defining other patentable features of the present invention in addition to those recited in independent Claim 29. Applicants' request further individual consideration of the dependent claim is requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that all outstanding matters in the above application have been addressed and that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the above application is respectfully sought.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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